

# **Sama Dharma Impact of Rama on Ramanuja Sampradaya**

## **Equality attribute of Rama and Ramanuja**

**Sri Vasan Srirangachari, M. Tech. Translator of various rare Sri Vaishnavite Manipravalam- works into Hindi & English**

Srimate Ramanujaya Namaha

Though the topic given to me is to narrate how Rama and Ramanuja had exhibited the equality attribute in them, I would like to show one similarity between Rama and Rangaji here before proceeding. Sri Rama transformed a blade of grass into a Brahmastra. Our Sri Rangaji made me stand here and talk. You may ask how can I compare myself with Brahmastra? Yes, it is such a commendable task to make me who is a tiny blade of grass to talk to this August audience. With his and Sri Anna's grace, I will try to present the thoughts on the subject matter.

Ramarajya of Sri Rama was envisaged by Sri Ramanuja. Samataa or equality was the highlight of Ramarajya. Sri Ramanuja followed the footsteps of Sri Rama in establishing equality in Srivaishnavism.

Sri Rama is celebrated as gunavaan, embodiment of virtues in Bala kaanda. The main guna is sheela guna. It is named as King of all gunas by Srivaishnavite acharyas. Srivaishnavite Poorvaachaaryaas explained the sheela guna as the one in which a person of higher status mingles freely with a person of lower status. It is like water in a cup getting mixed with water in another cup and not like mixing of oil and water. Sri Valmiki says how Sri Rama used to behave with the citizens of Ayodhya. Brusham bhavati dukhitaha. Sri Rangaji explains this virtue by an example. A person might overcome the sorrow of losing his father 10 days after his death. But Sri Rama used to continue to mourn for his death. This is irrespective of the status of the citizen.

Here I want to mention how Sri Ramanuja was more miserable by seeing the misery of jivas who had not realised their miserable state.. He did sharanaagati to the Divya Dampati on behalf of all jivas. Can you find such an acharya anywhere?

Sri Rangaji always mentions that nowhere in Ramayana, discrimination based on caste or even species is mentioned and Ramayana is an epic of equality. In Sri

Ramanuja's theology also, all discriminations take a back seat as far as a vaishnavism is concerned.

Sri Ramanuja was of the opinion that Varnaashrama Dharma is a saamaanya Dharma and Vaishnavism is a Vishesha Dharma.

This sheela guna is seen throughout Sri Ramayana.

In Ayodhya Kaandam, we see this guna when Valmiki says that the Nishad raja, the king of hunters is equal to Sri Rama from the point of view of Sri Rama. Aatmasama sakhaa. Sri Ramanuja went one step ahead and considered Sri Kanchipoorna who belonged to the third varna as his acharya.

In Aaranya Kaandam, Sri Rama introduces himself to shoorpanakha like he used to introduce Himself to a sage by saying Abhivaadya. Sri Ramanuja also introduced himself to a hunting couple when he was lost in the deep jungle in the same way.

Sri Rama accepted fruits from Sabari, a tribal woman because of her acharya sambandham. Here srivaishnavite acharyas say that the fruits were first bitten by her before offering them to Sri Rama to test its taste. This Shabari's tasting of the fruits was also first written by Srivaishnavite acharyas as per Sri Rangaji's research.

Sri Ramanuja wanted to take the remnants of the food of Sri Kanchipoorna. He gave such an importance to the remnants that he renounced his wife as she was against this. She was a follower of saamanya Dharma. She could not digest the vishesha Dharma of Sri Ramanuja.

Again in Aaranya Kaandam, Sri Rama grants moksha to a bird Jatayu by performing the Brahmamedha ritual which is generally performed for the great brahmanas.

Here I will like to talk about the incident of performance of last rites of Maaranera Nambi :

On the instruction of his acharya Sri Yamunaachaarya, last rites of Maaranera Nambi a Harijan by Sri Mahapoorna following the rituals of Brahmameedha Samskaram which is usually done for a great vedic brahmana. Disciples of Sri Ramanuja inquired the acharya the reason for transgression of scriptures. Though Sri Ramanuja was aware of the reason, he wanted his disciples to hear from Sri Mahapoorna himself and he took them to the Acharya. Sri Mahapoorna said, " I didn't do anything new. Rama had done this for Jatayu. Maaranera

Nambi was a human being but Jataayu was a bird. The great Rama did Brahmedha Samskaram for Jatayu. But where is the question of transgression when I followed Sri Rama's footsteps ?

Here I would also like to mention that Srishaileshaacharya, the acharya of Sri Manavala Maamuni observed the austerities of a disciple when he heard that Vilaanjolai Pillai had left his body. Villanjolai Pillai was an Harijan disciple of Sri Pillai lokacharya. Hence the concept of caste discrimination didn't exist among the vaishnavites during the period of Poorvaachaaryaas.

In Kishkindha Kaandam, Sri Rama makes friends with the Monkey King Sugreeva. He takes his army's help in the war with Ravana. Sri Ramanuja also took help from the Harijans to protect Sampath Kumar from the Muslim soldiers. Like Sri Rama felicitated them after the victory in the war, Sri Ramanuja also felicitated the Harijans by permitting them to enter the temple at Melkottai. It was a daring act in those days. Here I would like to mention an incident involving Nadaadoor Azhwan :

Nadaadoor Azhwan was a cousin of Sri Ramanuja. He was walking on the street of Srirangam holding the hand of a brahmana Srivaishnavite. Seeing a Harijan srivaishnavite walking towards them, the brahmana said to the harijan, "Get away from our path". Hearing this, Sri Nadaadur Azhwan fainted. When he regained his consciousness, his disciples asked the acharya the reason for fainting. The Acharya replied, " Can this person who has got initiation in Vaishnavism and fortunate enough to live in Srirangam be considered as untouchable? I am only untouchable as I have stolen the aatma which belongs to Bhagavan from time immemorial. " See the Acharya's thoughts. He is considering the Harijan vaishnavite superior to himself who was a brahmana.

In Sundaram Kaandam, Sri Rama embraces Hanuman after he returns from Lanka. Sri Ramanuja also does a similar act but in a different context in the form of holding the hand of Dhanurdas after a bath. While going to Kaveri for a bath, Sri Ramanuja used to hold the hands of brahmana disciple for support but after the bath used to hold the hands of Dhanurdas. When his disciples asked the reason for this act of their Acharya, Sri Ramanuja replied, "We all being Brahmanaas will have subtle ego of high caste. But Dhanurdas being not a brahmana is always humble. Hence I thought by getting the touch of him, I too will get that virtue of humility. "

In Yuddha Kaandam, it is said that Sri Rama had meals with Hanuman. Again it is a vishesha Dharma. Here I would like to narrate an incident from Nadaadur Ammal's life which is as follows:

Once, a disciple visited the house of Nadaadoor Ammaal. He was shocked to see his acharya taking food along with a non brahmana srivaishnavite. Nadadoor Ammaal said, "Vaishnavites belonging to any caste are supposed to be treated on par with brahmana- srivaishnavites. Otherwise it is a big offence."

Sri Rama's associates included people from various classes like Nishad, Sabari, Sugreeva, Vibheeshana etc..

Sri Ramanuja had innumerable disciples belonging to various castes who were treated on par with brahmana disciples. Here I would like to mention on the chanting of Divyaprabandham by them along with brahmana srivaishnavites on the streets of Srirangam during the procession of acharya's divine body. This is recorded in the 13th century text Guru Parampara Prabhavam.

An incident of housewarming can be narrated again as an act of equality. Sri Yamunacharya was renovating his house. One of his disciples Sri Maranera Nambi (belonging to down trodden caste) went inside the house just to see it. When the acharya heard about the visit of his disciple, he cancelled the housewarming ritual saying, " Housewarming is done by the dust of the holy feet of the outcaste disciple who is a great vaishnavite. "

Sri Rama equally bestowed attainment of Vaikunta on all citizens of Ayodhya irrespective of caste, gender etc. because of their love for Him.

Sri Ramanuja opened the doors of Vaikuntam to all people without any discrimination by preaching the path of Prapaatti because of their eagerness to get liberated.

Equality of kanyakaryams: Sri Rama accepted the service of a squirrel in building the bridge equal to that of big army of monkeys. This kanyakaryam is beautifully described by Sri Thondaradipodi Azhwar in his work " Tirumalai ". Azhwar says that a squirrel thought, " These monkeys are very slow in building the bridge. Rama had breakfast here. He should reach the other side of shore for meals. How is this possible? Hence let me expedite the work by plastering the stones by pouring sand between them. " Then it made its body wet with sea water and then rolled on the shore so that maximum amount of sand grains will stick to its body. It then used to shed that sand in the middle of the boulders. Sri Rama saw

if from a distance and asked Laxmana to get the squirrel to Him. He felicitated it by patting it on its back.

Sri Ramanuja showed mercy on Dhanurdasa, a wrestler and showed him the divine eyes of Ranganatha. Having seen it, he got engrossed in it for hours together. This episode showed everyone is eligible for Bhagavad Anubhavam. Acharya has nominated ten groups of vaishnavites to do different kainkaryams in Srirangam temple involving every section of the society in Kainkaryam. There were people from different communities like potters, flowermen, tailors, painters etc. in these groups.

Irrespective of the person, the one who does kainkaryam is felicitated by Ranganatha. This system was begun by Sri Ramanuja in Srirangam.

Sri Rama felicitated the squirrel, sugreeva, Hanuman, Vibheeshana for their different kainkaryams.

Sri Ramanuja asked a yadava woman who offered buttermilk to him in Tirumalai about her desire. She said she wants to attain Paramapadam. Acharya prayed to Venkateshwara and she got it soon. This is similar to the prayer by a boatman to Rama. Thus Rama and Ramanuja were equally compassionate and thought that everyone was eligible for liberation which is sought after by great sages.

In Srivaishnavism, it is peculiar to note that Azhwars mostly were inclined towards Krishna Bhakti whereas the poorvaachaaryas were inclined more towards Rama bhakti. Even to explain the verses from Divyaprabandham which talk of Shringaara rasa of Krishna, they were search in nook and corner of Ramayana to present the shringara rasa between Rama and Sita.

Here I would like to narrate an incident during the Bhagavata Mela conducted by Sri Anna at Mumbai in 1991. On the last day, Sri Anna asked Sri Hariji to speak and he spoke on the soulabhya guna of Krishna and said no one can equal Him in soulabhya guna. During his speech, we all could see how desperate Sri Rangaji was to snatch the mike and prove that Rama was more sulabha. At that time, he was hardly 12 years old. He said Krishna was sulabha for a Kubjaa, florist only but Rama extended his Soulabhya guna to even monkeys, bears and squirrels also. There was a big applause from the Bhaktas in the audience. That sapling of Rama-bhakti of Sri Rangaji has taken a form of a huge banyan tree like in Panchavati giving shelter to millions of Rama bhaktas.

In Sri Vaishnavism we say, in our daily prayer for last 1000 years, "Ramanuja's order should reach all directions for the welfare of the world." If we introspect, have we taken the order of our Purvacharyas, I don't think we have done it. One of the main reasons of not reaching of it is the caste discrimination found in some persons of Sri Vaishnava tradition. This has to go. In the heart of our Purvacharyas, caste discrimination had no place in Sri Vaishnavism. I take the opportunity of this platform to express my opinion.

Srimathe Ramanujaya nama.

# Sama Dharma Impact of Rama on Ramananda Sampradaya

**Sri Vishal Pandey, Disciple of Padmavibhushana Svami Ramabhadracharya, Researcher in IKS in IIT Kanpur, contributing in remodification of Valmiki Ramayana commentaries & digitisation and translation of Avadhi manuscripts related to Sri Ramananda Sampradaya**

रामं स्वादिगुरुं नत्वा परंब्रह्मसनातनम् ।  
द्विभुजं जानकीनाथं सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहम् ॥  
सीताञ्चादिगुरुं नत्वा चिद्रूपां रामवल्लभाम् ।  
श्रीरामसानिध्यवशात्सृष्टिस्थित्यंतकारिणीम् ॥  
समस्त निगमाचार्य्यं सीताशिष्यं गुरोर्गुरुम् ।  
सर्वविद्याधिनाथं हि हनुमन्तं प्रणम्य च ॥  
श्रीसीतानाथ समारम्भां श्रीरामानन्दार्यं मध्यमाम् ।  
अस्मदाचार्य पर्यन्तां वन्दे श्रीगुरु परम्पराम् ॥  
जयति कवि कुमुद चन्द्रो हुलसी हृद्धर्षवर्धनस्तुलसी ।  
सुजन चकोर कदम्बो यत्कविता कौमुदीं पिबति ॥  
श्री गुरु चरण सरोज रज, निज मनु मुकुरु सुधारि ।  
वरनऊँ रघुवर विमल जसु, जो दायकु फल चारि ॥

I pay my humble obeisances to my Gurudeva's lotus feet, his worshippingable deity, Sri Chitrakut Viharini Vihari Ji and Sri Goswami Tulasidas Ji Maharaja, who is the foremost Acharya of the Ramananda Sampradaya after Sri Svami Ramanandacharya.

I have been requested by Ranganatha Svami Ji to address the topic "Impact of Sri Rama's Samadharma on Ramananda Sampradaya."

Therefore, I would like to remember srirangaraghava bhagvana by offering this chaupai at his lotus feet :-

बार बार वर मांगिहौं हरषि देहु श्रीरंग ।  
पद सरोज अनपायिनी भगति सदा सत्सङ्ग ॥

May sri ranga raghava bhagvan bestow upon me uninterrupted bhakti of his lotus feet and satsanga of ramaprapannas like you all.

## Introduction to Ramananda Sampradaya

To begin with, I would like to give a brief introduction to the Ramananda Sampradaya. This Sampradaya is a lineage of Sri Rama Shadakshar Mantraraja, which originated from Sri Sita-Ramachandra Himself. In the beginning of creation, Sri Rama gave His divine mantra to his eternal consort Sri Janaki. Later, Sri Janaki Ji initiated Sri Hanuman Ji into Sri Rama Mantra. Sri Hanuman Ji then initiated Brahma Ji. Through the successive lineage of Acharyas, including Vashishtha, Parashara, Vyasa this Rama Mantra was eventually passed down to Svami Raghavanandacharya, who later gave this mantra to Svami Ramanandacharya Ji, who appeared almost 725 years ago in Teertharaj Prayaga.

He is considered as major propounder acharya of the Rama Mantra in the medieval Bhakti period. This parampara is also known as Sri Sampradaya or Sri Janaki Sampradaya as Sri Janaki who is "Sri" is the primeval acharyaa of this sampradaya. This fact is stated in Valmiki Samhita as follows :-

इमां सृष्टिं समुत्पाद्य जीवानां हितकाम्यया।  
आद्यांशक्तिं महादेवीं श्रीसीतां जनकात्मजाम् ॥  
तारकं मन्त्रराजं तु श्रावयामास ईश्वरः ।  
जानकी तु जगन्माता हनुमन्तं गुणाकरम् ॥  
श्रावयामास नूनं स ब्रह्माणं सुधियांवरम् ।  
तस्माल्लेभे वशिष्ठर्षिः क्रमादस्मादवातरत् ॥  
भूमौ हि राममन्त्रोऽयं योगिनां सुखदः शिवः ।  
एवं क्रमं समासाद्य मन्त्रराजपरम्परा ॥

Valmiki Ramayana also states Sri Rama to be guru of Sri Janaki as follows :-

यो मे भर्ता स मे गुरुः – Sri Janaki herself says that Sri Rama is my Svāmī and Guru.

The Sampradaya is also known by other names such as "Vairagi Sampradaya" or "Ramavat Sampradaya."

The devotees who take initiation into Rama Mantra from Ramananda Sampradaya are called Ramanandīs. Some older works like Shakti Sangama Tantra define the word Ramanandī as:

*"सर्वत्र समरूपश्च रामानन्दी प्रकीर्तितः"*

Ramanandīs are well known for their equanimity towards all beings.

Another interpretation is found in a Tantric work named Gopala Paddhati, which states:

*"हृदयाम्भोज मध्यस्थे श्रीरामे परमात्मनि ।  
आनन्दं भजते यस्तु रामानन्दी स उच्यते ॥"*

"One who worships Paramātmā Sri Rāma situated at the center of his lotus personified heart, is known as a Ramanandī."

## **Samadharmā of Sri Rama Reflected in Ramananda Sampradaya.**

Being ekantika upasakas of Sri Rama, Ramanandīs embody the virtues of Sri Rama. Valmiki Ramayana states:

*"आर्यः सर्वसमश्चैव सदैव प्रियदर्शनः"*

Sri Rama always maintains equanimity towards all entities. Commenting on this verse, Govindaraja Svami says:

*"जातिगुणवृत्त्यादि तारतम्यं विना सर्वेषामाश्रयणीयत्वे तुल्यः"*

This means that Sri Rama is equal in being worthy of refuge for all, without distinctions based on caste, qualities, or conduct.

This principle is the fundamental basis of the Ramananda Sampradaya, which Svami Ramanandacharya Ji expresses in his major work "Sri Vaishnava Matabja Bhaskara" as follows:

*"सर्वे प्रपत्तेरधिकारिणः सदा शक्ता अशक्ता पदयोर्जगत्प्रभोः ।  
अपेक्ष्यते तत्र कुलं बलञ्च नो न चापि कालो न च शुद्धतापि वै ॥"*

All are eligible for Sharanagati (surrender) unto lotus feet of Jagatpati Bhagavan Sri Ramachandra at all times—whether strong or weak. Neither lineage, nor strength, nor even purity is a prerequisite.

Svami Ramanandacharya further states:

*"उत्कृष्टवर्णैरपि वैष्णवैर्जनैर्निकृष्टवर्णः स तदीयसेवने ।  
तथानुसर्तव्य इतीष्यते बुधैः शास्त्रैर्विधेये विधिगोचरैः परैः ॥"*

learned scholars who are well versed in prescribed rituals declare that in regard to devotional service of bhagavan, even those of upper varnas must humbly follow the footsteps of prapannas belonging to lower varnas who are firmly fixed in unwavering devotion of Sri Sitaramachandra equally as vice versa.

Achāryacharana gave equal right to all in receiving imprints of bhagvadayudhas saying

*"पञ्चायुधाङ्का भुवि वैष्णवा ये मुखाग्रजक्षत्रियवैश्यशूद्राः ।  
स्त्रियस्तथाऽन्येऽपि च विष्णुरूपा जगत्प्रवित्रप्रपवित्रिणस्ते ॥"*

any brahmana, kshatriya, vaishya shudra, men or women and even those who doesn't fall in the above category, if they are adorned with ramaprapatti, are abode of all teerthas. Purifying the world by their presence and sanctifying even the teerthas, they are embodiment of sarvavyapaka bhagavan Sri Rama.

Holding this nature of equanimity towards all the beings, Svami Ramanandacharya states:

*"श्रयन्ति धर्मास्तु तथा पृथक् स्थितान् सुवक्रगाः सिन्धुमिवापि निम्नगाः ।  
काष्ठस्थवह्नेरिव घातको हरेश्वराचरस्थस्य च जन्तुहिसकः ॥"*

just as rivers flowing non rectilinearly also meet in sea, all the virtues takes shelter of those who are widely apart from materialistic violence. Slayers of innocent living beings are like slayers of hari who is pervading animates and inanimates like fire residing inside wood.

However, this non-violence should not be misunderstood as the one propagated by Gautama Buddha or Mahavira. The Ahimsa stated here is explained by Goswami Tulasidas Ji as:

*"परम धर्म श्रुति बिदित अहिंसा"*

Here, "Shruti-Vidita Ahimsa" (vedic non-violence) is the supreme Dharma. It involves eliminating those who slay innocent beings and disrupt Vedic Yajnas.

Practicing Vedic Ahimsa, one becomes humble towards all living entities, yet strong in opposing Adharma. This makes a person more generous and compassionate, as stated in Valmiki Ramayana:

*"रामोपि परमोदारः"*

Sri Rama is Parama-Udara (supremely generous).

## **The Compassion and Inclusivity of Sri Ramananda**

Svami Nabhadasa, the author of the exemplary work Bhaktamala, which entails the charitra of several bhaktas from various sampradayas, glorifies Sri Ramananda as:

*रामानन्द उदार सुधानिधि अवनि कल्पतरू ।*

Sri Ramananda is a reservoir of immeasurable compassion and generosity, a spiritual benefactor for the whole world.

This generosity is evident in an incident recorded in the Bhavishya Purana (Pratisarga Parva, 21st chapter):

*रामानन्दस्य शिष्यो वै चायोध्यायामुपागतः ।  
कृत्वा विलोमं तं वैष्णवांस्तानकारयत् ॥*

भाले त्रिशूल चिह्नं च श्वेतरक्तं तदाभवत् ॥  
कण्ठे च तुलसीमाला जिह्वाराममयी कृता ॥  
म्लेच्छास्ते वैष्णवाश्चासन् रामानन्द प्रभावतः ॥  
संयोगिनश्च ते ज्ञेया रामानन्दमते स्थिताः ॥  
आर्याश्च वैष्णवा मुख्या अयोध्यायां बभूवुरे ॥

During the rule of the Yavanas, Bharatavarsha was suffering heavily, and conversions were at their peak. Witnessing this, one disciple of Svami Ramananda went to Ayodhya and brought many back to Sanātana Dharma, initiating them into Vaishnavism by adorning them with Urdhvapundra Tilaka (white and red marks in the form of a trident) on their foreheads. Those who were once Mlechhas became Vaishnavas under the influence of Svami Ramananda. These devotees came to be known as Sanyogins, who firmly adhered to the doctrine of Svami Ramananda. They became exalted Vaishnavas and settled in Ayodhya.

## Unconditional Bhakti and Equality in Ramananda Sampradaya

In the Valmiki Ramayana, Sri Rama not only bestows immense love but also grants his supreme abode to Jatayu, a meat-eating vulture. Following this bhāva, Sri Krishnadasa Payohari Maharaja, the grand disciple of Svami Ramananda, demonstrated an extraordinary act of selflessness at Galata Teertha in Jaipur.

Once, while engaged in tapasya, he was chased by a hungry tiger seeking flesh. In response, Payohari Ji offered a portion of flesh from his own thigh to the hungry tiger. Witnessing this supreme sacrifice, the tiger prostrated at his feet. Moved by the surrender of the tiger, Svami Ji bestowed Pancha Samskāra upon him, giving him Rāma-sambandhi Nāma, Dhanurbāna Mudrā, Tulasi Māla, Urdhvapundra Tilaka, and the most exalted Rāma Mantra.

This incident, recorded in Bhaktamala by Svami Nābhādāsa, affirms the Samadharmitā of the Ramananda Sampradāya.

Among Rāmānandīs, the following saying is very popular:

"राम भजन और साधु सेवा दे गए रामानन्द"

Sri Ramananda gave Rāma Bhajana and Sādhu Sevā to the whole world.

Any temple served by Rāmānandīs invariably contains a Shivalinga, as Mahadeva is regarded as the Āchārya of the Rāma Mantra and the Paramānurāgi of Sri Ramachandra. Therefore, even being an Ekāntik Upāsaka of Sri Sita Ramachandra, Sri Gosvami Tulasidas has given almost equal if not more respect to Sri Mahadeva, to whom he attributes his exemplary work, Sri Rāmācharitmānasa. He glorifies Mahadeva as his spiritual guru and father saying :

"गुरु पितु मातु महेश भवानी"

Thus, keeping Sri Sita Ramachandra at the epicenter of their devotion, Rāmānandīs, see this entire cosmos as Sharīra of Sri Rāma and pay their obeisances with folded hands:

सीयराम मय सब जग जानी । करहु प्रनाम जोरि जुग पानि ॥

## Ramananda as the Bridge to Bhakti Beyond Caste Distinctions

Svāmi Nābhādāsa in his Bhaktamala states :-

"(श्री) रामानंद रघुनाथ ज्यों दुतिय सेतु जगतरन कियो ॥  
अनंतानंद कबीर सुखा सुरसुरा पद्मावती नरहरी ।  
पीपा भावानंद रैदास धना सेन सुरसुर की घरहरी ॥  
औरो सिष्य प्रसिष्य एक ते एक उजागर ।  
जगमंगल आधार भक्ति दसधा के आगर ॥  
बहुत काल बपु धारी के प्रनत जनन को पार दियो ।  
(श्री) रामानंद रघुनाथ ज्यों दुतिय सेतु जगतरन कियो ॥"

Just as Sri Raghunatha built a bridge to cross the mighty ocean, Sri Ramananda, instead of constructing a physical bridge became the bridge himself, uplifting Saṃsāra by spreading Rāmabhakti without any Jātibheda (caste distinctions).

He accepted disciples from all Varnas:

Svami Anantananda and Sursurananda were Brahmins.

Svami Pipa, the king of Gagraungarh province in Rajasthan, belonged to the Kshatriya clan.

Dhanna Jaat was from the Vaishya community.

Svami Ravidas was Shudra by birth.

Svami Kabirdas was not even born a Hindu but was a Muslim weaver.

Among female disciples were Queen Padmavati, wife of King Pipa and Sursuri Devi, the wife of Svami Sursurananda.

Among these disciples, Svami Kabirdas and Svami Ravidas were the most influential in spreading Rāmabhakti among marginalized sections of society. They preached Samadharmā across all sections, keeping Sri Rama at the epicenter of Bhakti.

## **Hanuman Garhi and the Transformation of Nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah**

The present-day Hanuman Garhi temple was built by Nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah of Avadh. Before that, this place was known as Rāmkot, where, in the early 18th century, a Rāmānandī Sādhu, Svami Abhayarāmadās, used to perform Tapasyā and serve the Vīgraha of Hanuman Ji.

Once, the Nawab's youngest son fell severely ill with an undiagnosable stomach ache. In desperation, the Nawab's wife brought the child to Svami Abhayarāmadās Ji Maharaja, pleading for his life. Out of compassion, Svami Ji gave the Prasāda of Hanuman Ji Maharaja, and upon consuming it, the child was instantly cured.

The Nawab, who had earlier imposed heavy taxation on Hindus and temples in Ayodhya, was struck with guilt. He came for Darshana of Svami Ji and requested permission to build a large temple at Rāmkot, which became the present-day Hanuman Garhi. He also constructed Rajdvara Mandir in front of Hanuman Garhi and donated generously for the upkeep of many temples in Ayodhya.

This incident highlights how preaching Samadharmā through Rāmabhakti results in the sustainable welfare of society.

Gosvami Ji says that if someone wants to know, he should know that Sri Rama only gets pleased through unconditional love.

“रामहि केवल प्रेम पियारा ।  
जानि लेहु जो जान निहारा ॥”

Sri Rama's rule is characterized by unconditional compassion, justice, and total inclusivity, which is what has formed the core of Ramanand Sampradaya. This divine parampara emphasized that Bhakti and Prapatti is universal and accessible to all, transcending social boundaries and welcoming every soul into ultimate refuge of Sri Sitaramachandra.

Keeping Sri Sita Ramachandra in my heart and the Charanapadukas of sri sadgurudeva on my head, I take my leave after chanting this Upadeshātmaka Shloka spoken by Sri Hanuman Ji Maharaj in Srimad Bhagavatam:

"सुरोऽसुरो वाप्यथ वानरो नरः सर्वात्मना यः सुकृतज्ञमुत्तमम् ।  
भजेत रामं मनुजाकृतिं हरिं य उत्तराननयत्कोसलान्दिवमिति ॥”

श्रीसीतारामचन्द्रार्पणमस्तु